A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES AT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

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A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES AT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

by

Frances O'Neill O'Flaherty, B.A., B.S.W.

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

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Dedicated to the memory of

my friend Iris Kirby, B.S.W.

1938-1983

Abstract

This quantitative-descriptive study reports data on BSW graduates of Memorial University of Newfoundland, describing their career development since entering the job market. It also assesses the relationships between education/training, job preparedness and employment opportunities in the social welfare field in the province of Newfoundland. The study sample was composed of 205 persons who graduated between May, 1970 and May, 1982. Data were collected by means of a mailed, self-administered, structured questionnaire over a six-week period in October and November, 1982.

The review of the literature suggested that external influences, e.g., political, economic and/or social conditions, are more likely to determine employment opportunities in the social welfare field than are the types of education/training obtained by graduates. Analyses of the data indicated that the respondents were proportionately younger and more female than graduates from similar BSW programs. A cohort of mature graduates (22%), aged 25 years or older at graduation, were identified as having more social work experience, present employment in administrative/supervisory positions and a better understanding of the coursework component of the programs. The respondents found social work jobs soon ($\bar{x}$=1.4 months) after graduation, 80% continue to live and work in Newfoundland and 70% work in cities the size of Corner Brook (25,000) or larger. Furthermore, only 32% work for provincial departments of social services but 38% are working in hospitals and an additional 10% work in health-related settings. The majority of respondents (66%)

were deployed in direct treatment positions, 25% were administrators or supervisors and only 9% were primarily responsible for community organization, research, planning or teaching. The respondents gave a generally positive global assessment of the BSW programs: only 8% found the preparation inadequate. Twenty-six percent were studying for, or had completed subsequent degrees. The finding that 65% belonged to professional or occupation-related organizations reflects positively on the graduates' sense of professional socialization.

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A Follow-up Study of Bachelor of Social Work Graduates At Memorial University of Newfoundland

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Canadian employment opportunities in social welfare have grown rapidly since the early 1960's. In 1971, 30,530 persons were employed in social work related occupations (Statistics Canada, 1974). By 1975, this number increased 21% to 37,060 (Statistics Canada, 1977). In Newfoundland, the rate of growth in this sector of the labour force parallelled the national rate. Four hundred and twenty persons were employed in these categories in 1971 and 490 positions were reported in 1975.

During this same period, the number of employed persons identified specifically as social workers in the Canadian labour force increased even more dramatically. For example, from 1961 to 1979 there was an increase of some 90% (10,855 - 18,605). The figures for employed social workers in Newfoundland during the same period showed similar increases, more specifically, from 60 to 110 persons.

Canadian social work education has also undergone a similar growth during this period (Crane, 1974). Between 1974 and 1978, the total number of social work degrees granted annually in Canada increased by 36%, from 1,115 to 1,527 (Statistics Canada, 1981).

In Newfoundland, social work education has been aligned with the local job market from the beginning. For example, Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's established a certificate program

in 1963, specifically to train employees of the provincial Department of Welfare.

In 1970, Memorial's Department of Social Work granted the first Bachelor of Social Work degree. In 1974, the School of Social Work was established and a Master of Social Work program began in 1976. Since the school's inception, the educational orientation has been toward a generalist degree program designed to emphasize the provision of statutory social services in rural settings. Up to the present time, this emphasis has prevailed and the school remains the principal training agency for social workers in the province.

The number of social workers graduating each year in Newfoundland increased rapidly from 13 in 1974 to 45 in 1978. For the first time, in 1978, the graduates included six persons with MSW degrees.

Although it is difficult to predict future national manpower requirements with any degree of accuracy, it appears that employment opportunities for social workers in Canada have been consistently good. A 1978 Statistics Canada Survey revealed that 88% of 1976 social work graduates were working, and the remaining 12% (all of whom were women) indicated they were not looking for work (Statistics Canada, 1981).

Similarly, The Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission forecasted that 21,920 social workers will be required in the Canadian labour force by 1985 (CEIC, 1981). This represents an increase of 18% over the 1979 estimate, an encouraging prospect in the present generally gloomy national employment picture.

Information about the relationship between employment in the social services and effective educational preparation for the job market is especially timely. Although the province experienced significant

social change during the 34 years since Confederation, the process has been accelerated since the mid-1970's by the prospect of offshore resource development.

One manifestation of this social change has been the expansion of social services in Newfoundland. Initially, new services were introduced automatically as a consequence of Confederation. More recently, new services reflect the needs of a society in transition. For example, in 1981 a home for battered wives was opened in St. John's and a provincial commission to deal with alcohol and drug abuse was recently appointed.

It is inevitable that growth in the Newfoundland economy will continue to generate a further expansion of social services. Professional education will be most effective if it is studied and developed in relation to local identified social service needs.

Statement of Purpose

No systematic attempt has been made to study the effectiveness of the BSW program offered by Memorial University's School of Social Work in preparing graduates for employment in the social services. In fact, relatively few follow-up investigations of social work graduates of North American schools dealing with any aspect of the educational process have been reported in the literature. Of those which have been published, there appears to be a difference in focus between Canadian and American studies.

Canadian studies tend to be fewer and to focus at the macro level of educational policy and planning, in an effort to obtain an overview of the manpower needs of various employment settings. For

example, Melichercik (1973) undertook such a survey of 46 social welfare organizations in southern Ontario. Similarly, Crane (1974) reported on a national follow-up of graduates at three levels of social service education for the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW). His intention was to provide the CASSW with a data base to formulate policy and assist member schools in program planning. McMahon (1977) reported on a survey of social service graduates of several technical training programs in Ontario and included measurements of the graduates' job satisfaction and job mobility in conjunction with the type of employment obtained.

American studies have generally been conducted by faculty or students from a particular school, and these investigations have been confined to some idiosyncratic aspect of that school's program or student population. For example, Radin (1976) reported on a follow-up study of MSW graduates from the University of Michigan in order to assess their practice competence. Her major findings were that 91% of the respondents (n=730) were employed as social workers but 33% were deployed in positions which did not emphasize their area of trained specialization. Similarly, Siegal (1978) reported on a survey of graduates from a newly developed social policy specialization at Rutgers University. This survey indicated that, although none of the respondents had experience in social policy prior to entering the program, 38% of the graduates were successful in finding subsequent employment as social work/social policy practitioners.

From a somewhat different perspective, Scurfield (1980) reported the findings of a survey of 285 social work administrators working in Los Angeles County, California, in regard to their evaluations

of prior administrative educational preparation. His findings indicated that only 47% had any educational background in administration; however, the respondents appeared to find clinical practice (81%) the most highly valued aspect of their training.

Some recent follow-up studies have broadened their focus from strictly educational issues (see Rushford et al., 1980; Sales, Shore & Bolitho, 1980, for examples). Nonetheless, the work by Radin (1976), Siegal (1978) and McMahon (1977) which studied practice competence and educational effectiveness provides a rationale for further study in this area.

As evidenced by an examination of both Canadian and American research in this field, there is a general paucity of investigations which assess social work educational programs from the standpoint of educational preparedness, degree of congruence between education/training and manpower needs, and overall program effectiveness. Thus, any efforts in this regard would contribute to filling a distinct research void.

This is a retrospective quantitative-descriptive study of graduates of the BSW program at Memorial University School of Social Work which is located in St. John's, Newfoundland. The purpose of this study is two-fold: 1) to examine the nature of the employment obtained by these graduates and 2) to obtain an indication of the perceived effectiveness of this program as preparation for employment in Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition, certain demographic data, e.g., age, marital status, previous education, place of residence, etc., will be analyzed as they relate to the major purposes of the study.

The implications for such a study are many and varied. For example, the findings could assist in formulating educational policies and procedures, and in determining whether educational/training needs are related to manpower demands. They could also help initiate a data base for further research and planning in this area. This study also seems timely in that the BSW program has had a full decade in which to grow and mature within the context of provincial social conditions which are changing at an accelerated pace. Thus, the capacity for the social work profession to assume its proper role in the Newfoundland social welfare field requires study to assist the profession in establishing accountability for its various service responsibilities.

The Concepts

The Bachelor of Social Work degree is defined as the first professional degree, recognized by The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and The Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW) (Herington, Knoll & Thomlison, 1981). BSW program/education refers to the five-year program of study of social work courses, electives and field placements outlined in the calendar of Memorial University School of Social Work, in St. John's (MUN Calendar, 1982).

The terms professional education and professional training are used interchangeably to refer to formal degree programs offered by Schools of Social Work. The minimum culmination of such education/training would result in the Baccalaureate degree. These concepts include: required course work, electives, field work and practicum which fulfill the requirements of the degree program.

Continuing education refers to an array of educational offerings which range from degree programs and unrelated continuing education

courses offered by institutions of higher learning to carefully planned, internally coherent programs developed by an agency's staff development department to train employees for specific positions or tasks (Harbert, Jones & Shaupp, 1981). Continuing education studies may be initiated by the employer or the employee, but enrollment usually follows rather than precedes appointment to a position. Individuals who partake in continuing education usually do so for non-degree or non-credit purposes, i.e., simply continuing one's education.

Social service delivery system refers to the organizational arrangement made by governments at all levels to implement their social policies and provide personal social services to their citizens. These services are primarily provided by government departments or agencies, but there has been a growing trend to arrange for services through contracts with private or voluntary organizations (Ghere, 1981).

Social welfare field is defined as 'the full range of organized activities of voluntary and governmental agencies that seek to prevent, alleviate, or contribute to the solution of recognized social problems, or to improve the well-being of individuals, groups or communities' (Pumphrey, 1971, p. 1446).

Review of the Literature

Despite the acknowledged need for research related to the effectiveness of post-secondary education/training programs in the social sciences in preparing graduates for employment, some concern has been expressed that the subject has received minimal systematic attention (Hays, 1976). O'Neil (1980) reiterated this concern specifically for the social work profession and concluded that much of the relevant, and/or related work is largely unpublished. The literature available clearly suggests that more planning, research and scrutiny must be directed toward understanding the relationship between social work education and job preparedness (Melichercik, 1973).

Planning social work education programs for specific employment opportunities has met with varying degrees of success. In general, social work educators value their autonomy and tend to view planning as an academic prerogative whose benefits eventually influence service delivery (Crane, 1974). However, there is evidence which suggests that economic and political factors outweigh professional and academic concerns about 'social needs' as the rationale for changes in service delivery. For example, schools of social work in the northeastern United States recently instituted routine formal planning courses into their academic programs after the federal government had severely cut the funding of local social service agencies (MacNair & Stewart, 1982).

In order to explain the relationship between professional social work educational systems and employment opportunities and the changes in service delivery, it is helpful to examine briefly other educational systems outside Canada. Since the origins of Canada's comprehensive

social welfare programs can be traced to the British system, it is reasonable to assume that major modifications in the latter's service delivery may eventually influence Canadian social services. Similarly, it is important to consider current American trends in this regard. Despite significant differences in the scope and organization of the American and Canadian social welfare systems, there are many similarities between their professional education programs which are constantly reinforced by the proximal physical and intellectual ties between the two academic communities (Loewenberg, 1979).

The literature related to social work education as a preparation for professional employment will be reviewed in the following way:

1) employment opportunities and education/training in Britain;
2) employment opportunities and education/training in the United States;
3) employment opportunities in Canada;
4) education/training in Canada;
5) employment opportunities in Newfoundland;
6) education/training in Newfoundland at Memorial University of Newfoundland's School of Social Work.

Employment Opportunities and Education/Training in Britain

The British social service delivery system evolved within the context of a Western liberal democratic form of government. It was based on the principles of universality, comprehensiveness and equality, and emerged from a value system which generally reflected a socialist ideology. The range of services provided was sufficiently extensive for the society to be defined in socio-economic terms as a welfare state (Kahn & Kamerman, 1977).

Although social welfare's roots can be traced to The Elizabethan Poor Laws of the 1600's (Lubove, 1968), the provision of services by

social workers in Britain formally began in the mid-19th century under the auspices of The Charity Organization Society. The earliest form of social work training was introduced by the National Children's Home in 1860 (CCETSW, 1975). One hundred years later, social service delivery had evolved into an institutionalized system administered by local authorities and, to a lesser extent, voluntary organizations. It included child and welfare services, as well as social services in health, education and housing departments (Spencer, 1970).

Within the context of the welfare state, social policy theorists and planners exerted considerable influence. For example in the 1950's, Dame Eileen Younghusband's proposal for the establishment of a municipal family service, among other social policy recommendations, contributed significantly to the re-evaluation and revision of British social services (Spencer, 1970).

In the 1960's, the British government responded by authorizing a thorough review of its service delivery system. As a result of The Seebohm Report (Great Britain, 1968), service delivery in England experienced a massive reorganization in 1970 under The Local Authority Social Services Act. A similar change had previously taken place in Scotland under The Social Work (Scotland) Act of 1968. The intention behind both the English and Scottish reorganizations was to allocate services according to the requirement that 'client needs' be matched with social work skills (Smith & Harris, 1972). Subsequently, new services in Britain were based on a social work team approach which operated from numerous decentralized social service departments.

In addition to orienting social services toward community and client needs, the general intent of this approach was to provide a better career structure by establishing the personal social services

system as a discrete department, with an extensive bureaucracy to administer the re-defined services (Sutherland, 1980). For example, the number of fieldworkers employed in the new departments increased from 12,684 in 1972-73 to 21,000 in 1975-76. However, the number of administrators employed increased from 7,365 to 17,191 during this same period (Brewer & Lait, 1980). The immediate implications for social work education and employment opportunities as a result of this were overwhelming.

In an analysis of the impact of this reorganization, Spencer (1976) outlined several problem areas which concerned professional education and employment. He indicated that most of these factors had not been foreseen or clearly understood before the reorganization took place. These factors were:

(i) new and improved services were required at significantly increased costs;

(ii) increased numbers of trained staff were required for the new conditions of service delivery;

(iii) a new generic training approach was needed to prepare social workers to deal with a wide variety of client needs;

(iv) the unification of a range of small decentralized services into a single service greatly increased the size and complexity of the new organization.

It soon became obvious that existing educational programs could not provide adequate training for these tasks.

Spencer (1976) further pointed out that the reorganization of the British social service delivery system resulted in organizational changes in several related but independent sectors. For example, the central government shifted some responsibilities within its departments and added a special Social Work Advisory Service as part of the Department

of Health and Social Security. Also, several professional social work associations amalgamated into the British Association of Social Workers.

Most importantly, The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) was established by law in 1971. The new CCETSW, with membership from employer groups, professional bodies and educational institutions, was responsible for the promotion and development of training in all fields of social work practice unified under the new social service departments. Some 150 social work programs which had previously been monitored by three separate accrediting bodies came under the overall jurisdiction of the CCETSW. In addition, the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) was instituted as the principal professional certification of this new council.

The changes in the British social service delivery system, inspired by social policy theorists and planners, exerted considerable pressure on professional educational institutions to revise their programs. In fact, a working party on manpower and training predicted that the number of professionally trained personnel required to staff local authority and probation services would increase from 15,643 in 1973 to 65,800 by 1985 (Great Britain, Department of Health and Social Security, 1976).

To summarize the British experience: social theorists promoted and brought about wholesale revision of the social service delivery system, without calculating the impact of that revision on social work education and manpower needs. Thus, social work educational institutions have had to realign their activities to adjust to modification of the system on such a massive scale. The creation of the CCETSW, with its legislated authority and broadly-based expertise, is intended to provide the planning capability for future changes.

Employment Opportunities and Education/Training in the United States

> The structure of U.S. economic and political institutions historically has determined social welfare and social work agencies' practices and educational institutions. (Prigoff, 1980, p. 120)

The social service delivery system in the United States evolved in the context of a highly pluralistic society with a liberal-democratic form of government. The values of individualism, confidence in self-help, dislike of government interference, personal enterprise and acquisitiveness have generally tempered the endorsement of comprehensive social welfare programs (Kahn & Kamerman, 1977).

Ambivalence about planned government intervention has created marked fluctuations in this social service delivery system. These fluctuations have been further exacerbated by the American two-party political system which encourages routine shifts in funding to state and local governments as a means of creating identifiably different social policies.

The vulnerability of the American social service delivery system to political and economic pressures can be illustrated by a brief review of the major fluctuations in the social service programs in the last 30 years. Prigoff (1980) identified a series of political-economic considerations during that period which resulted in subsequent changes in employment opportunities that, in turn, affected educational programs.

During the 1950's, the profession's emphasis on casework services was reinforced by the anti-Communism of the McCarthy era. For example, any interest in social action or collective efforts to improve social conditions was largely replaced by a self-protective withdrawal into the psychoanalytical treatment model which rooted problems at the individual level (Prigoff, 1980).

In the 1960's, the 'War on Poverty' was launched by the reigning Democrats as a means of strengthening their base in northern black 'central cities'. Initially, the anti-poverty program provided increased funding for intensive casework services. As a consequence, employment and training opportunities rapidly expanded.

During President Richard Nixon's term of office (1968-75), a serious economic recession led to reduced public funding for various anti-poverty programs. In their place was a demand for meaningful evaluation procedures, which served to bureaucratize the system and make it more accountable.

In the late 1970's, new client groups and populations needing social services were identified (Zimbalist, 1978). Thus, a variety of specialized treatment approaches and special interest groups became the focus of social work interventions.

Recent worldwide economic uncertainty has resulted in an increasingly conservative political climate in the United States. Prigoff (1980) related these circumstances to social work's current professional interest in private practice.

Since the 1960's, the traditional American social service delivery system has been further modified by the growth of human service organizations whose structure was intended to provide an umbrella for a wide variety of people-changing services within large organizations (Stein, 1980). This trend resulted in the decentralization of many designated social work positions, allowing other professional groups to demonstrate competency in order to perform the work (MacNair & Stewart, 1982).

Faced with a general vulnerability to political and economic pressures and the resulting shifting patterns of employment, American

social work educational programs have grown numerically and become increasingly varied in range, form and content (Meinert, 1979). From the inception of American education for social work practice the MSW was regarded as the entry-level professional qualification.

Baccalaureate programs gradually emerged during the 1960's. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the sole accrediting body in the United States, formally recognized the BSW as the beginning professional degree in 1974. By 1979, there were 247 baccalaureate programs, 84 master's degree programs and 38 doctoral programs accredited by the CSWE. Enrollment in baccalaureate programs increased from 24,845 students in 1975 to 33,387 in 1978 (CSWE, 1981).

A review of the U.S. literature on current trends in social work education and employment opportunities reveals that the profession is striving to maintain growth through accommodation to frequently changing social needs (Wodarski, 1979; Munson, 1980; Biggerstaff & Kolevzon, 1980). This reactive capacity has always characterized American social work and enabled it to adapt successfully to the unique demands of its socio-political system (Zimbalist, 1978).

Social work educators have started to respond to the demands for accountability within the profession by attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of their educational programs as preparation for practice. Follow-up studies of graduates have examined aspects of the relationship between educational experiences and employment outcomes.

For example, Radin (1976) conducted a follow-up study of 730 MSW graduates of The University of Michigan's School of Social Work. This study attempted to assess competence levels by examining the quality and quantity of work performance. The graduates' descriptions of their functions were accepted as measures of work quantity, and

evaluations by current work supervisors were used as measures of work quality. Her findings revealed that 91% of the graduates were employed in social work positions. Also, one-third of the graduates were performing work for which they had not been educated, although their supervisors evaluated all the respondents highly.

Siegal (1978) did a similar study on the first five graduating classes of social policy students from Rutgers University Graduate School of Social Work in New Jersey. This study compiled data on employment and salaries of social workers. Of the 61 subjects, 90% were employed in social welfare agencies after graduation. Seventy-seven percent of the graduates held positions in social policy, administration and community organization.

Two recent studies have specifically examined women's issues and experiences as social work graduates. Sales, Shore and Bolitho (1980) examined the characteristics, role difficulties and role satisfactions of 45 mothers who entered The University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work between 1972 and 1976, and found no serious adjustment problems during school or after graduation. They also found no evidence of 'dilettantism' among these women, of whom 87% held social work positions after graduation. Rushford et al. (1980) surveyed 343 students and graduates of Boston College School of Social Work in order to assess attitudes toward women's professional achievement. Their findings showed that more women than men chose casework as a specialization and these women had lower salaries and lower salary expectations, as a consequence.

Two other recent studies attempted to evaluate broader aspects of program design and content. O'Neil (1980) compared social workers from one and two year graduate social work programs and concluded that

two year graduates performed better in their jobs. Biggerstaff and Kolevzon (1980) studied MSW, BSW and BA level practitioners, and recommended clearer articulation of educational outcomes by schools offering BSW and MSW programs.

There has been an increase in the number of studies examining the relationship of specific concentrations/specializations and job performance. Hairston (1980) asked a group of social work administrators who had graduated from The University of Tennessee's School of Social Work how they viewed their education as preparation for employment and how well they were doing their jobs. Her findings suggested that educational preparation does make a difference to the way jobs are performed. Those administrators who had not specialized in administration were generally negative about that component of their educational program, and they performed much more staff supervision than trained administrators, who focussed on program development and managerial functions.

Scurfield (1980; 1980a) surveyed 285 MSW-trained social work administrators in order to evaluate the relevance of their educational preparation. Only 20% of the respondents had followed an administrative, and/or macro-oriented MSW program. These respondents valued clinical practice and human behaviour courses more than macro level courses and did not pursue macro-specific educational opportunities through continuing education options. This study also revealed that 75% of the administrators continued to perform clinical duties although only 9% of their agencies required this. These two studies suggested that clinically-trained social work administrators are not performing the role and functions implied by their position title.

Mahler (1982) addressed the issue of employment opportunities specifically for new BSW graduates in light of the current restrictive funding climate for social service programs. Her study focussed on job attainment, professional commitment and preparedness. The results indicated that baccalaureate level graduates found employment more readily in a tight job market than graduates surveyed in the sixties. BSWs also reported generally positive attitudes toward the profession and their educational/training experiences. This study supported the contention that there are a variety of practice opportunities for social workers, requiring different skills and competence levels.

To summarize, the American social service delivery system has been subjected to frequent and extensive revision in response to political considerations. Social work education has lacked a strong planning organization with the authority of the new British CCETSW to devise coherent national strategies for training to meet actual manpower needs. Instead some schools have established their own planning committees to try to develop programs which will equip their graduates for employment in a difficult job market. One of the benefits of a planned approach has been an increase in related research.

Employment Opportunities in Canada

The Canadian social service delivery system developed formally over the last 40 years in the context of a liberal democracy operating under a parliamentary model of government. During this same period, the federal government has been dominated by one centrist political party, despite fluctuations to the left and right which have had some effect on social policy (Kahn & Kamerman, 1977). The issue of the power of the federal government versus the provinces has increasingly

dominated Canadian politics since Quebec's Quiet Revolution of the 1960's.

Under the terms of the British North America Act of 1867, the provinces retained responsibility for the provision and operation of most social services. With the exceptions of employment and manpower programs, services to veterans and native peoples and the federal correctional-penal system, provincial social service delivery systems provide the remainder of personal social services.

Canadian social service personnel are employed almost entirely by governments, which regulate their practice directly, or though delegation (Findlay, 1978). When services are provided by voluntary or proprietary agencies, e.g., in the institutional care of children and the aged, the public sector remains the principal source of funding. Neither industry nor unions are involved in large-scale service delivery (Kahn & Kamerman, 1977).

In the early 1960's, both the United States and Canada experienced enormous prosperity and Canada, following America's lead, launched its own 'war on poverty'. The Canadian assault involved several different strategies including: redistribution of income to the poor; the creation of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion to reduce regional disparities; make-work programs (e.g. Opportunities for Youth, Local Initiatives Programs, New Horizons) to assist disadvantaged groups; an expanded housing campaign; and certain comprehensive programs including the Canada Pension Plan and a national health service (Billette, 1979). Although the plethora of federal program innovations in the 1960's was relatively insignificant in bringing many lasting changes (Findlay, 1978), they had the positive effect of revealing

serious gaps in existing services (Hepworth, 1976) and generating momentum for further reorganization of provincial service systems.

Commencing in 1971, the provinces of Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba introduced legislation to change the organizational structure of their social service delivery systems. Since that time, most of the remaining provinces have made extensive revisions to their services by administrative rather than legislative means. The result has been a radical reorganization of social services in Canada, based on principles of integration, decentralization and, to a lesser extent, community participation (Armitage, 1976).

Relatively little public attention has been paid to the magnitude of these changes and their implications for the social work profession and the general public. Integration, with its ideological ties to both the British and American current approaches to service delivery, is regarded as an inevitable development in Canadian social service delivery systems. Wharf (1977) pointed out that integration of health and social services had become an American 'fad', with no less than 26 states, to the date of his writing, having established comprehensive human resource agencies. By the mid-1970's integration was underway in at least five Canadian provinces, and the processes of decentralization and community participation were receiving less attention (Armitage, 1976; Hepworth, 1976; Ryant, 1976).

The 'New Depression' of the late 1970's, also influenced the delivery of social services (Havemann & Riches, 1978). The deepening Canadian economic malaise, complicated by the socio-political considerations of the constitutional debate, resulted in the scrapping of the Social Services Act in 1977 and the subsequent block-funding

proposal. Limitations in funding for the personal social services persist at a time when increasing numbers of Canadians are being forced by the depressed economy and tightened restrictions in unemployment insurance benefits to accept public assistance.

Social Work Education/Training in Canada

The first school in Canada for the education of social workers was established at the University of Toronto in 1914, followed in 1918 by the School for Social Workers at McGill University in Montreal. By 1948, social work education had grown sufficiently to warrant the founding of the National Committee of Canadian Schools of Social Work. Subsequently, the Canadian Association for Education in the Social Services (CAESS) was established for social service educators in Canada (CAESS, n.d.).

In 1967, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW) was established as the successor organization to the National Committee. Membership is voluntary and is comprised of university schools and departments which offer professional education in social work at the undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels. The CASSW has no jurisdiction over pre-university level programs, and its funding comes from membership fees and operating grants from the federal government. The principal functions of the CASSW are two-fold: 1) to formulate objectives for social work education programs at various levels of university study and 2) to accredit social work education programs offered by Canadian universities (CASSW, 1979).

The widespread social turbulence of the 1960's led the social work profession to re-examine its purposes, activities and future directions (Melichercik, 1973). Segal (1975) summarized the prevailing

trends and issues within the profession and identified three discrete models of the social work practitioner. These were: 1) those who followed a traditional casework model of practice; 2) those who advocated system-change, focussing on the institutions and policies which victimize consumers; and 3) those who were 'concerned with re-designing personal social services within a participatory, integrated and de-professionalized framework' (Segal, 1975, p. 5).

Related to these alternative practitioner models there were a number of changes in Canadian social work education. Several schools initiated curriculum revisions in an effort to keep their offerings relevant to changing conditions (Olyan, 1979). One of the best examples of a program relevant to local community needs was undertaken at The University of Regina, where the nature of the province, the needs of the population, the potential students and local social agencies formed the focus for program development (Barnes, 1976; Spencer, 1976).

Some social work educators have criticized the decreased emphasis formerly placed on basic academic instruction in social policy and administration (Rose, 1975). With the steady growth of government intervention in social service delivery, such academic instruction is deemed essential if social workers are to obtain services effectively for their clients (Havemann & Riches, 1978).

The relationship between politics and social service delivery has been discussed in the British and American sections. Similarly, legislated changes in the delivery systems in Canada, specifically in Quebec and Manitoba, have significantly threatened social work education through de-professionalization and de-credentialization of personnel (Barnes, 1976; Woodsworth, 1976). Further, the political-economic climate

in Quebec in recent years has continued to undermine the provision of social services and related employment opportunities (Robichaud, 1981).

Some have expressed concern that the CASSW may lack the capacity to provide leadership in formulating sound educational standards in the face of such divergent perspectives. Barnes (1976) stated that the CASSW was dominated by its accreditation rather than its development function. Havemann and Riches (1978) thought that its funding base, i.e., the federal government, might inhibit its role. According to Kimberley and Watt (1982), the CASSW must reach a definite understanding about the organization's role in establishing mandatory standards for Canadian social work education.

A number of recent Canadian studies have focussed on the relationship between academic programs and practice settings. These studies have tended to be more broadly based than the American literature on the subject, and have included at least two national surveys. In retrospect, the total available research in this subject area is limited.

Melichercik (1973) surveyed 46 Ontario social welfare agencies with a total of 2,389 approved social welfare positions. His purpose was to find out what types of personnel were currently employed, how they were deployed within the organizations, and what kinds of skills were being sought in prospective recruits. He found: 1) that 45% of the staff had MSW degrees, 36% had general BA degrees, 10% were BSW graduates and 8% were community college graduates, 2) non-professional staff occupied 47% of all the direct service positions, 3) staffing had increased overall by 12% between 1970 and 1972, and 4) the respondents preferred MSW graduates for administrative, supervisory and consultative positions and wished to replace untrained personnel with staff trained

at the MSW, BSW and community college levels for assignment to differentiated categories of positions.

In 1974, the CASSW published the results of a national study of social service graduates (Crane, 1974). The purpose of the study was to determine the employment rate, the type of employment, mobility and urban/rural employment distribution of the graduates from MSW, BSW and community college programs for the two successive years, 1971 and 1972. The findings indicated that only 65% of all the graduates had found jobs within 10 months of graduation. Of the MSW students, 88% were employed, and 60% of the BSW students and approximately 50% of the technically trained students had found employment during this same period. Despite differing levels of education/training, 91% reported they were primarily providing casework or groupwork services, and only 5% had exclusively macro-level positions. Finally, the majority of graduates (80%) were working in such traditional settings as income maintenance, health and family and child welfare services.

A similar study was conducted by McMahon (1977), who followed up graduates of non-professional social service programs at four Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology (CAAT) during 1971-73. In addition to examining the nature of the employing agencies and the deployment within them, he researched job mobility, job satisfaction and involvement in continuing education programs. He found that 77% of the respondents were employed in the social welfare field, primarily in public assistance and child welfare; 11% were deployed at the administrative level, 19% as supervisors, 69% at the direct service level and only 1% in social work assistant positions. The respondents were generally satisfied with their jobs and their satisfaction level varied

directly with the higher their position in the organization. The reported involvement in formal continuing education programs was extensive as 34% were studying for or had obtained university degrees since their graduation from the CAAT's.

Statistics Canada recently published the results of a 1978 survey of graduates of professional social work education programs for the year 1976 sampled across Canada (Statistics Canada, 1981). Of the 902 respondents 88% were employed. The 12% unemployed were all women with BSW degrees. The study reported job dissatisfaction only in the MSW/PhD group. Within this group, 17% regretted their choice of field of study but this finding was within the range of research findings from a number of occupational groups studied.

Melichercik (1980) surveyed a group of professional social workers in 10 social welfare agencies in Southern Ontario to examine their job satisfaction. His results revealed that 82.2% of the respondents were generally satisfied with their jobs.

The only Canadian study which attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of a specific social work educational program was conducted by Maslany (1976). He surveyed all the BSW and Certificate in Social Work graduates of the University of Regina for 1975, to find the nature of their employment and their opinion of the relevance of their coursework. He found that 93% of these graduates were employeed full time in social work positions within seven months of graduation. The majority (52%) described their main job focus as casework. A further 32% were employed in administrative, supervisory or consultative positions. Most (or 73%) worked for the Saskatchewan government, with the Department of Social Services as the principal employer. Regarding the relevance of their

professional education, 81% recognized gaps in their coursework, but only 21% felt they were underqualified for their jobs. Finally, 90% were generally pleased with their employment.

To summarize the Canadian experience, social service delivery systems and social work education/training have been subject to extensive pressure for change since the early 1960's. In response, at least three Canadian provinces have undertaken revisions of their social service delivery systems of a similar magnitude to the British reorganization. Numerous new services/agencies have been created to fill service gaps.

Expectations for social work practice have also changed in light of changing social conditions. These new expectations, combined with revised employment opportunities, have forced the rapid expansion of social work educational programs and experimentation with a variety of educational models.

Canadian social work education in the 1980's appears to have the variety and vitality to prepare social workers for effective practice in Canada. The CASSW's role must be strengthened to establish mandatory standards to safeguard the quality of professional education.

Employment Opportunities in Newfoundland

Public sector social services staffed by professionally trained social workers have a relatively short history in Newfoundland. Originally, programs to dispense public relief, which employed stipendiary magistrates as relieving officers as early as 1901 throughout rural communities, formed the basis of the social service delivery system. Three decades later, this method was generally recognized to be inefficient and extensive reforms were proposed (Nfld. Royal Commission on

Health and Public Charities, 1930).

Although The Department of Health and Public Welfare was established by law in 1931, the reorganized delivery of social services did not improve significantly. Social conditions were such that greater emphasis was placed on maternal and child health (Nfld. Department of Health, 1952). Related to this need, two social service workers were appointed to the St. John's office of the Public Welfare Division in 1935 to provide child welfare and family counselling services (Nfld. Annual Report, 1936).

By the early 1940's, child welfare services were increased to deal with the growing numbers of children requiring care and training. In 1944, The Division of Child Welfare was established within The Department of Health and Public Welfare and legislation was enacted to enable the Division to provide services (Power, 1973).

Newfoundland officially became a province of Canada on March 31, 1949. Four months later (on July 28), a separate Department of Public Welfare was established. Since that time this department has evolved from a highly centralized organization with major emphasis on public assistance, to a regionalized service with expanded preventive and rehabilitative program components.

When this department was established, a new field staff of Welfare Officers was recruited to replace the Relieving Officers from the earlier administration (Pottle, 1954). From 1950-66 the number of field staff grew from 25 to 146 personnel stationed in 53 separate welfare offices across the province (Pope, 1967). By 1981, the reorganized Department of Social Services included approximately 300 administrative and line positions for professional social workers.

The first permanent social work position in the health services was created at The Hospital for Mental and Nervous Diseases, now called The Waterford Hospital, in 1948. Subsequently, The Sunshine Camp, later renamed The Children's Rehabilitation Centre, set up a Social Services Department in 1960. Social workers were employed sporadically at The General Hospital in St. John's from 1951 onward, but it was not until 1970 that a department of social work was formally established.

By 1981, social services had expanded to 18 hospital and health-related services throughout the province. At present, some 80 social workers are directly employed in the health care system in Newfoundland and Labrador, with approximately 20 others in the rehabilitation field, including The Workmen's Compensation Board.

Within the provincial justice system the Adult Corrections program currently employs 14 probation officers in regional offices and four classification officers in the penal system. The Unified Family Court, a joint project of the federal and provincial governments, includes social work personnel to provide specialized family counselling and family crisis intervention services.

One of the benefits of Newfoundland's entry into Confederation was the dramatic increase in the number of federal social welfare programs for which residents automatically qualified. Initially, the federal impact on the professional social service sector was greatest at the implementation and administrative level. This has been somewhat modified by recent increases in such direct service programs as the Parole Service, Veterans' Affairs and Manpower programs. Although these are not designated social work positions, there are approximately 100 jobs in the Newfoundland branch of the federal civil service

which involve a significant counselling/rehabilitation component.

Until the twentieth century, the private sector, in particular religious groups and charitable societies, provided most of the social services in Newfoundland. After 1949, increased provincial government responsibility resulted in a marked decline in private involvement. As recently as 1976, the private sector's efforts were concentrated in institutional services to children and the aged, with family counselling and alcohol rehabilitation beginning to be developed (MUN. School of Social Work, 1976).

More recently, the government has contracted with a number of private and voluntary organizations for the provision of new and specialized services. Consequently, many of these new services are again sponsored by religious groups, but the services themselves are being provided by trained social workers.

The reorganization of social service delivery in Newfoundland and Labrador has resulted in increased employment opportunities for professionally trained social workers. Although no precise figures are available, this review suggested that approximately 600 positions currently exist in the province.

Education/Training in Newfoundland: Memorial University of Newfoundland's School of Social Work

When Memorial University College was granted university status in 1949, it was given a legislative mandate to provide education and training necessary to meet the province's particular professional and technical manpower needs (Nfld. Govt. of Nfld., 1970). While the training of social service personnel was not specified in the act, it was not surprising that the University accepted this responsibility when requested to do so in 1962 by The Department of Public Welfare

(MUN, 1962).

The Diploma in Public Welfare was introduced in 1963 as an educational program for students interested in a career in public welfare who were employed by the Department of Welfare (Brett, 1974). Within a year, it was revised and the university moved to establish a formal degree program. This was due in large part to the high level of student interest in the field.

The Bachelor of Arts with a Social Welfare option (BASW) was introduced in 1965, and many of the enrolled Diploma students transferred to the new degree program. In fact, the Diploma was never awarded to any graduates.

Enrollment in the degree program doubled in the second year of its operation (1966) and the university increased its efforts to obtain full time faculty. Dr. F.J. Turner was appointed as temporary department head for the year 1968-69, during which he completed a report on the structure and objectives of The Department of Social Welfare (MUN. Department of Social Welfare, 1968). His report specified five major recommendations:

(i) The continued existence and development of the Department be fully supported and encouraged by the University;

(ii) The present plan of a Social Welfare Option in the Bachelor's programme be continued with some modifications of course and content;

(iii) In addition to the present Social Welfare option a fifth year be offered for the graduates of the option programme. Successful candidates completing this extra year will be awarded a professional degree to be named Bachelor of Social Work;

(iv) The University should begin immediately the necessary consultations, studies and planning with a view to the establishment of a School of Social Work in the University which would eventually offer the full range of professional degrees and diplomas;

(v) To implement the recommendations of this report, extraordinary efforts should be made to recruit and retain a high calibre of faculty to the department. (MUN. Department of Social Welfare, 1968, pp. 1-2).

This report also addressed the manpower needs in social services in the province. It identified an annual recruitment requirement in the provincial Department of Public Welfare amounting to 25 people. The report anticipated that trained social workers would also be needed in mental health, rehabilitation, community development and in the schools. Finally, the report predicted the eventual expansion of the private sector in the fields of child care, aging and family counselling. For example, it concluded:

> . . . In this province the majority of the social welfare services have been provided through the provincial Department of Public Welfare. It is clear that this situation will undoubtedly change in the near future. There is abundant evidence that a large number of new expanded services at the provincial and federal level, government as well as private services, are or will be developing, all of which are presently and will be, looking for qualified personnel to staff them. (MUN. Department of Social Welfare, 1968, p. 12)

In arguing for the immediate development of the BSW program, the report pointed out the inability of Newfoundland students to obtain professional status through local educational opportunities. Finally, it described the general objectives and content of the new BSW degree program as follows:

> . . . In general terms the Bachelor of Social Work programme would have as its goal the formation of persons with adequate theoretical knowledge and beginning professional competence in the three primary methods of social work, that is Group Work, Casework and Community Organization as well as some ability in administration and research. That is, we would have as our goal the graduating of social workers capable of practicing [sic] in a wide range of social agencies [emphasis added] and at a level of independence and competency consistent with beginning professional standards. In such a programme there would be no form of specialization in the professional aspects of the programme. It would be expected

> that students would tend to emphasize some areas of practice or methods of preference but this would not be to the exclusion of any method. (MUN. Department of Social Welfare, 1968, pp. 72-73)

The BSW program was first offered in September, 1969. In 1974-75, the BASW degree was phased out and the BSW degree, awarded for the successful completion of a five-year program of study and practice, became the school's principal educational offering. The program was accredited by CASSW in 1976 and, with minor revisions, again in 1982.

Both the social service delivery system and social work education have relatively short histories in Newfoundland. Since the mid-1970's, the province's social services have been extensively revised and expanded. Anticipated energy resource development is expected to require greatly increased social services within the next decade.

Social work education at MUN was designed to meet the manpower needs of a traditional social service delivery system. However, accelerated growth and development may generate new employment opportunities. Continual planning, analyses and research will be needed to meet these changing social realities.

Summary

This review of the literature has briefly surveyed the recent evolution of the social service delivery systems now operating in Britain, the United States and Canada. It has examined the process by which political, economic and/or social conditions affect the nature and extent of social services available within these countries. It has attempted to show how these influences have shaped the present social service delivery systems which, in turn, determine the employment opportunities available to professional social workers. It has

illustrated how the structure of the job market has implications for social work education in the countries surveyed.

The review of the literature has also revealed a considerable diversity within social work education in each of these countries. Although the British CCETSW controls standards for professional education and training in Great Britain, it must evaluate more than 150 different programs in order to do so (Spencer, 1976). In the United States, the number and type of programs has mushroomed in recent years without benefit of a strong planning or licensing authority (Meinert, 1979). Much the same circumstances prevail in Canada, but on a smaller scale. While individual schools revise their programs in attempts to maintain their relevance, the CASSW can only commend and advise the 17 Schools of Social Work through its voluntary accrediting function (CASSW, 1979).

The review of the literature has shown that there is a need to evaluate social work education programs to ensure that they prepare their graduates for the realities of the workplace. It has also shown that there is little existing research on the subject. Only a handful of studies could be found which attempted to evaluate all levels of social work education, including technical and professional programs.

Despite any policy and planning activities which may evolve at a national level, there remains a need for individual schools to become more sensitive to the social service needs of the communities in which they exist and for which they prepare students to find employment. This study has been undertaken in recognition of this need.

Method

Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) was first established as a college in 1925 and was raised to the status of university in 1949. In addition to the main campus in St. John's, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook provides liberal arts education to the first and second year levels. The Extension Service of the University has provided out-reach educational and community development programs since 1959.

The university has six faculties (Arts, Science, Education, Medicine, Engineering and Applied Science, and Business Administration) and four schools (Graduate Studies, Nursing, Physical Education and Athletics, and Social Work). These academic bodies are organized into three main groups under the Vice-Presidents of the university.

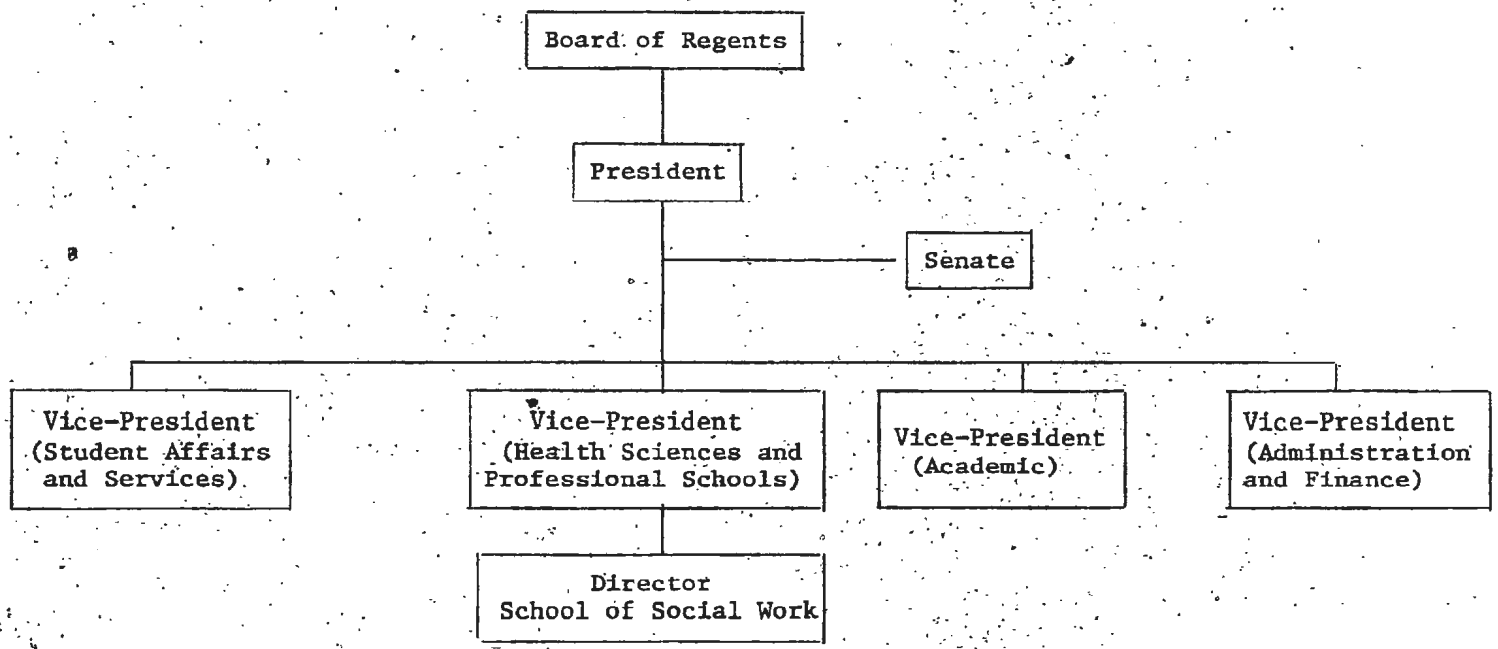
The Setting

MUN's School of Social Work provided the setting for this study. The School is an autonomous academic unit under the direction of the Vice-President (Health Sciences and Professional Schools) (see Organizational Chart I--Position of the Director of the School in the Administrative Structure of the University). The School has representation on the University Senate and on The Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Senate and The Academic Council of the Graduate School, which together concern themselves with all aspects of the academic life of the School.

The School is located in the northeast corner of the second floor of the Education Building. The facilities include general offices, offices for faculty and staff, and classrooms. Although the School has

Organizational Chart I

Position of the Director of the School of Social Work in the Administrative Structure of the University



(MUN. School of Social Work, 1982, p. 10b)

no distinct physical boundaries, it is virtually self-contained in this section of the Education Building.

Professional Education Programs of the School of Social Work

The School of Social Work was preceded by The Department of Social Work in the Faculty of Arts, which first offered courses leading to the BSW degree in September, 1969. The requirements at that time included 26 social work courses and an additional eight from the social sciences. The program also required the completion of one fifth-year field placement and a major research project. The goal of this program was to provide a sound liberal education for entry level social work practitioners in the province.

The BSW program was subsequently revised in 1970-71 along the lines of other undergraduate social work programs being offered elsewhere in Canada. Half of the courses in the revised five-year program were professional courses and two supervised field placements were required. The major research project was also discontinued.

The Department of Social Work was restructured into The School of Social Work in 1974. During that year, the faculty reviewed the curriculum and a new focus for the program was defined as follows:

> . . . This review confirmed existing views that the thrust should continue toward meeting the particular needs of the Province, with a primary focus on rural issues. . . . The BSW programme as the primary programme to be offered, was envisaged as graduating persons who would be generalists and prepared to work in situations where there are limited resources, both professionally and materially, and where the clientele may be in sparsely populated rural areas. (MUN. School of Social Work, 1976, p. 4)

The revised BSW curriculum was approved by the University Senate for implementation in the academic year 1976-77. The program remained essentially unchanged for the five-year period to 1982 when, with the

minor modification, it was re-accredited by CASSW.

The 1974 curriculum review reaffirmed the mission of the School, to develop programs which would meet the particular needs of the province. In addition to the BSW program, a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree was also developed, with concentrations in both direct practice and social policy and administration. The MSW program was approved by the Senate and a limited number of students were admitted in 1976. By May 1982, 17 students had graduated from this program.

Finally, a certificate program to provide upgrading for selected Department of Social Services employees was planned jointly with the Extension Service of MUN and the provincial government. It was introduced in 1977 and phased out in 1980, after meeting the primary program objectives (MUN. School of Social Work, 1982).

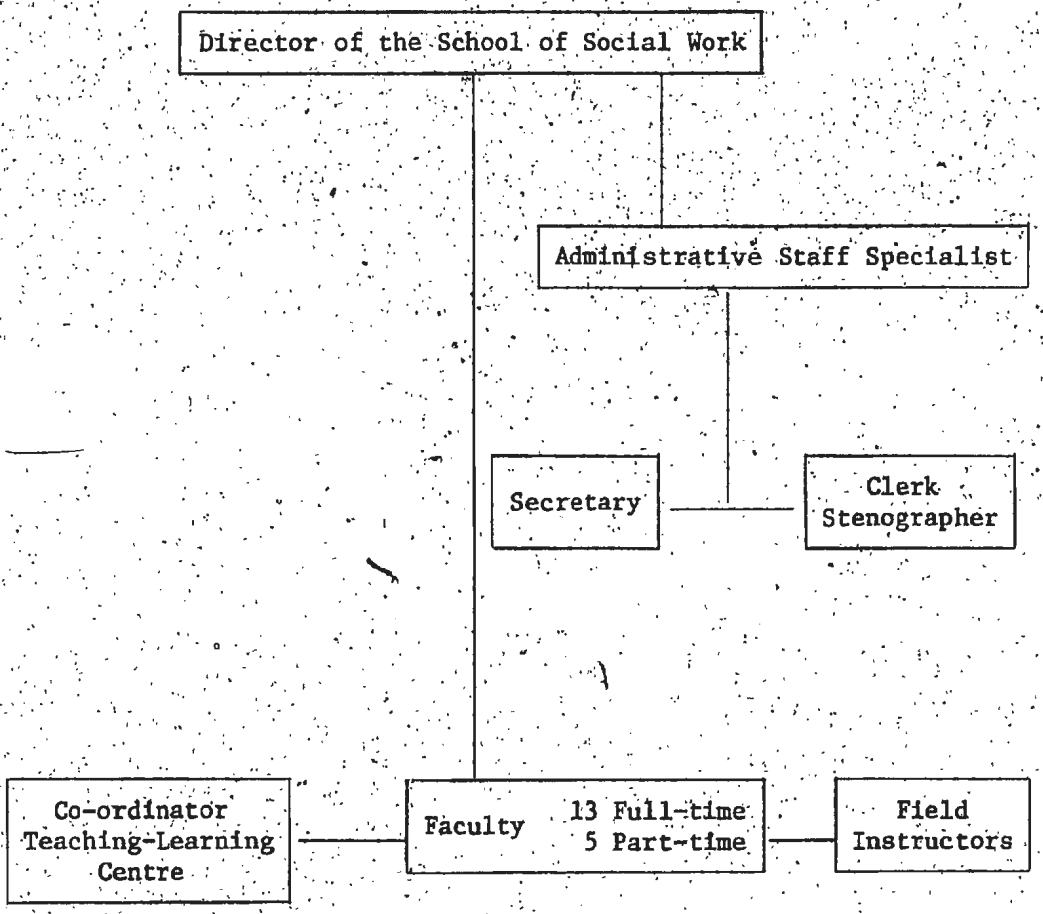
The Staffing and Organization of the School of Social Work

In 1982-83, the faculty of the School of Social Work included: one full professor who was also the Director, five associate professors, seven assistant professors and five sessional instructors. The School was also staffed by an administrative staff specialist and two secretaries. Each year the field placement program utilizes at least 35 instructors, of whom one-fifth are employed in agencies located outside St. John's (see Organizational Chart II--The Structure of the School of Social Work).

The organization of the School of Social Work is similar to that of other major academic bodies in the university. The Academic Council of the School has ultimate administrative responsibility for academic matters. It is made up of all full-time faculty, representatives from the university, the student body and the profession. It has

Organizational Chart II

The Structure of the School of Social Work



(MUN. School of Social Work, 1982, p. 10a)

three standing committees: The Committee on Undergraduate Studies, The Committee on Graduate Studies and The Committee on Planning and Policies.

The School also has a number of working committees to handle particular academic and administrative responsibilities. These are: The Admissions Committee, The Continuing Education Committee (composed of faculty and representatives of The Newfoundland Association of Social Workers), The Promotion of Human Subjects Committee and The Field Committee (see Organizational Chart III--The Relationship of Faculty Academic Bodies to those of the University).

The Sample

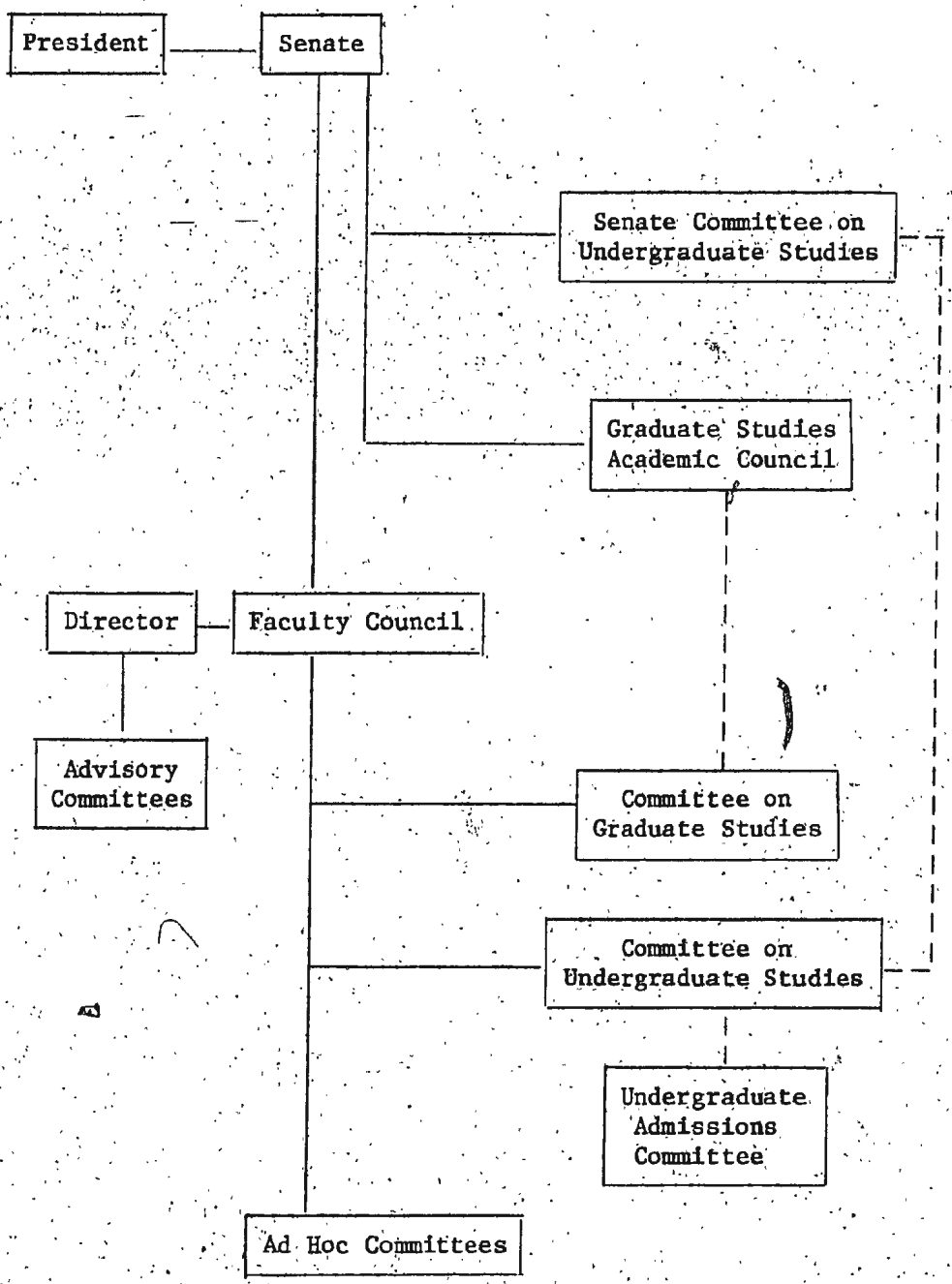
The population sampled for this study was composed of all graduates from the BSW program at MUN's School of Social Work from the first graduating class in May, 1970 to the graduating class of May, 1982. This population numbered 318 persons, of which 248 were females and 70 were males.

The graduating classes in the population varied in size from two to 43 students. The majority of students graduated at the spring convocations; however, 61 students (19%) graduated at fall convocations. All but 28 listed Newfoundland as their province of origin at the time of their registration in the BSW program.

This study did not include the MSW graduates as a group. This decision was based on the relatively small number (17), and the knowledge that the majority (13) had previously received BSW degrees from MUN, which automatically included them in the study sample.

Organizational Chart III

The Relationship of Faculty Academic Bodies to those of the University



(MUN. School of Social Work, 1982, p. 10c)

The Procedure

A pre-tested questionnaire was mailed to all 318 graduates in October, 1982. Current addresses for the graduates were obtained from a number of sources. These included: 1) the Alumni list compiled by the School of Social Work, 2) provincial directories, 3) personal contact with members of each graduating class to update peer whereabouts, and 4) by word of mouth. The original home addresses were used for a small group of graduates whose recent whereabouts were unknown. Thus, it was possible to survey all BSW graduates, with the assurance of knowing that over 90% of the addresses in the population sampled were reasonably accurate.

In a cover letter (see Appendix A), the purpose of the study was explained and assurances of confidentiality of individual data and identity were provided. A stamped addressed envelope, with the return address at the School of Social Work, was included with each mailed questionnaire.

A cut-off date of November 20, 1982 (six weeks after mailout) was set for acceptance of replies. By that date, 205 (64.5%) completed questionnaires were returned. Seven questionnaires were returned by the post office due to inaccurate addresses.

Analyses of all data were programmed through Memorial University Computing Services. All analyses utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences by Nie et al. (1975). All data were keypunched on GLOBE 5081, standard column IBM computer cards. Missing data were excluded from the analyses by item.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed in September, 1982. The majority of questions were adapted from instruments used in other follow-up studies in the same subject area (Crane, 1974; McMahon, 1977; Holosko, 1980; Statistics Canada, 1981; Mahler, 1982). The remaining questions were developed by the researcher in consultation with faculty from the School of Social Work.

The questionnaire was composed of four sections with a total of 31 questions which were primarily close-ended. The sections were divided as follows:

I. Background Information--(i) General demographic variables identified in this section were sex, marital status, community of origin and present residence. (ii) Educational background information included year of graduation, age at graduation, student marital status, and highest educational level ever attained. (iii) Occupational background included current employment community and length of social work experience.

II. General Questions about Social Work Education--This section consisted of five questions divided into two categories: (i) Personal status and social work experience, and (ii) Self-evaluation of social work education, obtaining the respondents' opinions of their performance in all aspects of the BSW program.

III. Employment History--(i) Occupational opportunities including the nature and length of job search, number of jobs held and present employment status. (ii) Present job information including name, location and type of employing agency and major area of responsibility.

IV. Continuing Education--(i) Post-BSW involvement describing the nature and extent of participation, program completion and educational resources used. (ii) The voluntary professional sector, including the nature and extent of involvement.

Four variables were restructured for further computations: (i) Experience in the social welfare field was broken into categories in which 'no experience = 0', 'some experience = 1-11 months' and 'much experience = 12 or more months'. (ii) Present employment situation was divided into two categories: employment in the social welfare field and employment outside the social welfare field. The latter category was composed of all the alternatives to employment in the social welfare field listed on the questionnaire: a) full-time student, b) full-time family responsibilities, c) employment outside the social welfare field, d) unemployed, and e) never employed in the social welfare field and no plans to do so. (iii) The location of the present employer was categorized into three discrete classifications: departments of social services, hospitals and an 'other' category which included all other provincial and federal government services, as well as non-governmental organizations. (iv) A variable identifying major area of responsibility in the respondents' present jobs was divided into three categories for second-level analysis: 1) administration/supervision, 2) direct treatment, and 3) an 'other' category which included Planning, Research, Community Organization and Teaching/Training.

The pre-testing of the questionnaire. The questionnaire previously described was pre-tested in a less refined form on a group of 17 students of the School of Social Work in September, 1982. All participants in the pre-test were mature students who were currently

or previously employed in some aspect of the social welfare field. All were unaware of the purpose of the questionnaire and the purpose of the study prior to this involvement.

This researcher administered the questionnaire and remained in the room to answer any questions pertaining to it. The participants completed the questionnaire in an average time of 11 minutes. The shortest completion time was seven minutes and the longest was 16 minutes. The results of the pre-test provided information which led to the refinement of the questionnaire to its present form.

Research Questions

No formal research related to social work manpower issues has been undertaken in Newfoundland. In 1981, the Board of Registration for Social Workers attempted to compile a provincial list of social work practitioners and designated social work positions. They identified some 550 employment opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador (Walsh, 1983). The provincial Department of Social Services maintains internal manpower statistics for recruitment purposes and offers financial assistance for educational upgrading to a small number of employees on an annual basis. The School of Social Work has periodically collected some basic demographic data, e.g., sex and community of origin, describing student characteristics (Hawkins, 1982).

This study represents the first systematic follow-up or investigation of BSW graduates at Memorial University of Newfoundland. This quantitative-descriptive study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the BSW program in preparing students for employment in this province. Consistent with the subject, focus and design of this study, a number of research questions are posed. These are in lieu of formal hypotheses but should be construed as providing the basis for the ensuing method.

This study seeks to answer the following five questions:

1) What are the characteristics of MUN's BSW graduates?
2) What organizations/agencies are employing these graduates?
3) How are these graduates deployed within the employing agencies?

4) How effectively did the BSW program prepare the graduates for the positions they have held since graduation?

5) To what extent are the graduates involved in ongoing education after they graduate?

Each of these questions is asked in the mailed survey which was administered to the study sample. They emerged from the literature review as being important in establishing baseline data on the subject of educational program effectiveness as preparation for successful employment in social welfare.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion of data are presented in the following two sections: 1) Descriptive Data and 2) Correlational Analyses.

Descriptive Data

The 205 graduates who comprised the study sample represent every graduating class from May, 1970 to May, 1982. The actual respondents and percentage response rate for each graduation year are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

The Actual Number and Relative Percentage of Study Respondents by Graduation Year (n=205)

Graduation Year	Number of Respondents per Year	Total Number of Graduates per Year	Percentage Response Rate (%)
1970	1	2	50.0
1971	11	13	84.6
1972	8	8	100.0
1973	9	17	52.9
1974	9	18	50.0
1975	7	18	38.8
1976	22	31	71.0
1977	21	30	70.0
1978	26	39	66.6
1979	32	42	76.2
1980	19	27	70.3
1981	24	43	55.8
1982	16	30	53.3
Total	205	318	64.5

Note. Percentage Response Rate was computed by the $\frac{\text{Actual Number}}{\text{Total Number}} \times 100\%$.

Demographic data. Of the 205 respondents, 79% were females and 21.0% were males. Their age at graduation ranged from 20 years to 44 years with the mode (70 respondents) being 21 years of age. The average age at graduation was $\bar{x}$=23.1 years, S.D.=3.5. A cohort of 44 respondents (22%) were 25 years of age or older at the time of graduation.

During the period they were studying for the BSW degree 81.5% were single, 8.8% were married, 9.3% were married with children and one student was single with children. At the time of this research study the graduates' status had changed significantly. For example, only 35.6% remained single, 60.5% were married and 2.9% were living in common-law relationships. Also, one person was separated and another was widowed. Table 2 provides some selected demographic characteristics of the study sample.

Table 2

Selected Demographic Characteristics of the Study Sample (n=200-205)

Demographic Characteristics	Statistical Breakdown
Sex	79% Female 21% Male
Age at Graduation (yrs.)	$\bar{x}$=23.1 yrs. S.D.=3.5 Mode=21.0 yrs.
Marital status while in BSW program	81.5% single 8.8% married 9.3% married with children

In order to determine the nature of geographic relocation due to program participation, respondents were asked to identify by size

the community in which they lived for most of their lives, and the community in which they now worked. More than half (51.7%) reported they came from communities with populations of over 30,000, while 14.3% came from communities of less than 2,000 people. At present, 64.7% are working in cities of over 30,000, 29.9% are working in towns with populations between 2,000 and 14,000 and only 1.1% are working in very small rural settings.

Of the 204 respondents who identified their present residence, 80.9% reported living in Newfoundland, one lived in Australia and the remainder resided elsewhere in Canada. Table 3 reveals a comparison of the residence of the study sample before and after graduating from the BSW program.

Table 3

Residency Status of the Study Sample Before and After Graduation

	Relative Frequencies (%)	
Residence Size	Before BSW Where lived most of life (n=203)	After BSW Where working at present (n=187)
In a large city of over 150,000	5.4	9.1
In a city of 31,000-150,000	46.3	55.6
In a city of 15,000-30,000	7.4	4.3
In a town of 2,000-14,000	26.6	29.9
In a rural community of less than 2,000	14.3	1.1

Information regarding the samples' employment and educational backgrounds prior to entering the BSW program was also ascertained. Fifty percent of the sample indicated that they had no experience at all in the social welfare field prior to enrolling in the BSW program, and 29.5% indicated they had four months or less experience.

Contrarily, 12.8% indicated they had between two and 13 years experience. The average length of social welfare employment prior to enrollment was 9.6 months, S.D.=23.1. When asked to provide a further assessment of their social work experience in another question on the instrument, 57.8% said they had none, 29.9% reported minimal experience and 12.3% reported they had significant social work experience.

The study sample was also asked to describe their life situation at the time of entering the School of Social Work at Memorial. These data are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Situation Prior to Entering the BSW Program
(n=204)

Life Situation	Number	Relative Percentage (%)
Directly from high school through junior division	124	60.6
Post BA from MUN or another university	44	21.6
Employed outside the social welfare field	19	9.4
Employed in a social work position	12	5.9
Housewife	4	2.0
Employed in non-social work position in social welfare field	1	0.5
Unemployed	0	0.0
Totals	204	100.0

Post-graduation employed history. Several questions were asked in order to determine certain occupational aspects of the respondents.

Related to the length of job search, 98% revealed that they had found employment as a social worker within 10 months of graduation. Of this group, 89 people reported they had found jobs prior to graduation. Only 3% reported looking for work longer than six months but 10.8% felt they had a difficult job search. On the average, it took 1.4 months for respondents to find a job after graduation.

Since graduation, 36.8% held only 1 social work position, 32.8% held 2 jobs, 18.6% had 3, 5.9% had 4, 3.4% had 5 and one person held 6 social work positions. The length of time spent at their present social work positions ranged from one month to 14 years with $\bar{x}$=29.6 months, S.D.=30.6. Since graduation, employment experience in the social-welfare field for 204 respondents ranged from zero to 11½ years (mode=3 years, $\bar{x}$=41.8 months and S.D.=32.6). The study sample identified occupational categories which best described their present work situation, as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5

Present Occupational Status for the Study Sample
(n=205)

Employment Categories	Number	Relative Frequencies (%)
Employed in the social welfare field	163	79.5
Full-time family responsibilities	15	7.3
Employed outside the social welfare field	15	7.3
Full-time student	6	2.9
Unemployed	4	2.0
Not worked in the social welfare field since graduation and do not expect to do so	2	1.0
Totals	205	100.0

Of the total sample, 174 graduates identified their present employer. These agencies were then grouped into mutually exclusive categories revealing: 1) 38.1% of the respondents were working in hospital settings; 2) 32.2% were working in provincial departments of social services; 3) 15.5% were employed in non-government social service organizations; and 4) 1% were working in jobs outside the social welfare field according to the definition used in this research. Table 6 provides data on the employment categories indicated.

Table 6

The Settings of Present Employment for the Study Sample (n=174)

Employment Setting	Number	Relative Frequencies (%)
Hospital settings	66	38.1
Provincial departments of social services	56	32.2
Non-governmental social service organizations	27	15.5
Federal government	10	5.7
Other provincial government departments	7	4.0
Other jobs in social welfare field	5	2.8
Jobs outside social welfare field	2	1.1
Canadian universities	1	0.6
Totals	174	100.0

These employing agencies were further broken down into more specific categories related to social welfare services. These data

indicated that, of 174 respondents, 24.1% worked in medical settings, 11.5% were working in mental health settings, 6.3% were in rehabilitation services, 5.2% worked with the aged and 1.7% worked with the mentally retarded. Another 15.5% worked in income maintenance services, 12.1% worked in child welfare and 8.0% reported working in the correctional field. Similarly, family services were identified by 4.0%, vocational/employment services by 2.3% and educational settings by 1.7%. Finally, 7.5% of the sample reported that they worked in 'other' types of agencies and no one reported being employed in private practice.

In order to further identify the nature of their work, respondents specified major areas of professional responsibility. These results are indicated in Table 7.

Table 7

The Major Areas of Professional Responsibility for the Study Sample (n=174)

Areas of Professional Responsibility	Number	Relative Frequencies (%)
Direct treatment	115	66.2
Administration	30	17.2
Supervision	14	8.1
Community organization	5	2.9
Other	4	2.3
Research/Evaluation	2	1.1
Planning	2	1.1
Teaching/Training	2	1.1

Post-graduation education. In this sample, 12.2% had already completed subsequent degrees after their BSW program. Of these, 11% had obtained MSW's and 2% (or 3) had an LLB, an MD and an MEd, respectively. At the time of this study, 14% of the graduates were enrolled in degree programs, 3% on a full time basis. Twelve (or 6%) were studying for the MSW, 7 were enrolled in general baccalaureate programs, 2 were completing MEd's, 1 each were in law, medicine and a doctoral program, and the remaining 5 in 'other' courses of study (not specified).

Twenty-eight (or 14%) respondents reported they completed formal non-degree educational programs since graduating with the BSW. The largest sub-group (9) completed a certificate program in criminology.

Continuing education at a less formal level was utilized frequently by the sample. For example, various programs offered by MUN's School of Social Work were attended by 30.4% of the sample. Within the employing agencies, 148 reported attending at least one staff education program. Of these, 76.3% had attended more than one program. A summary of these post-graduation education data are revealed in Table 8.

Table 8

Formal Post-graduation Educational Experiences
(n=205)

Further Education		Number	Relative Frequencies (%)
Present enrollment in university degree programs:	A) MSW	12	5.9
	B) Other	17	8.4
Completed post-BSW degrees:	A) MSW	22	10.7
	B) LLB,MD,MEd	3	1.5
Completed formal non-degree programs (e.g. Certificate in Criminology)		28	13.8

Retrospective views of the BSW program. When asked to make a global assessment of their undergraduate social work education, 92.1% of the 202 respondents indicated they had been adequately prepared (159) and very well prepared (27). Only 7.9% indicated that the program poorly prepared them for employment in the social welfare field.

When respondents were asked to report on their satisfaction with various components of the program on a three-point scale ranging from 'not adequate' to 'very adequate', 94.7% reported that the field practice component was 'somewhat' or 'very adequate'. Eighty-eight percent reported the coursework was 'somewhat' or 'very adequate'. In assessing the professional support and instruction by faculty, 67% reported it was 'somewhat adequate' and another 17.1% indicated it was 'very adequate'. Fifteen percent of the sample reported they were not satisfied with the faculty.

The $\bar{x}$ scores for each of these program components--field practice, support by faculty and coursework--were determined for the study sample. Table 9 reveals the reported degrees of adequacy for these program components.

Table 9

The Ranked Mean Degrees of the Adequacy of Three Major Components of the BSW Program (n=202)

Program Component	Mean Score ($\bar{x}$)	Standard Deviation
Field practice (n=204)	1.45	.59
Professional support and instruction by faculty (n=203)	1.03	.57
Coursework (n=204)	1.00	.50

Note. This was measured on a three-point scale: '0=not adequate', '1=somewhat adequate', '2=very adequate'. See Appendix B for a further interpretation of the scoring of this item.

In order to further understand these data, the coursework component was broken down into eight specific content areas. Respondents were asked to ascribe a degree of understanding to each of these respective eight content areas.

As indicated in Table 10, the majority perceived a good understanding of Human Behaviour and Social Environment, Communication Skills, The History of Social Welfare, Assessment and Intervention and Community Resources. Less than one-third of the respondents reported a good understanding of Social Research, Administration/Supervision and Social Policy and Planning.

Table 10

The Ranked Mean Perceived Degrees of Understanding of Various BSW Curriculum Areas (n=203)

Content Area	Mean Score ($\bar{x}$)	Standard Deviation
Human Behaviour and Social Environment	.90	.31
Communication techniques	.82	.38
The history and current nature of social welfare and the social work profession	.79	.41
Assessment and Intervention Skills	.74	.44
Community Resources	.65	.48
Social Research	.32	.44
Administration, Supervision	.28	.45
Social Policy and Planning	.25	.43

Note. These $\bar{x}$ scores ranged from 0-1.

Professional socialization after graduation. Respondents were asked to identify the professional or occupational associations of which they have ever been members. Thirty-five percent reported never belonging to any organization of this nature. Fifty-nine percent reported membership in their provincial social work association (e.g., The Newfoundland Association of Social Work), at some point during their social work career.

Discussion of descriptive data. The findings were previously presented in five sub-sections: demographic data, post-graduation employment history, post-graduation education, retrospective views of the BSW program and graduates' identification with the profession. The ensuing discussion of the data will correspond to that order.

The data shown in Table 1 indicate that for only one year, 1975, did the respondent rate for the sample fall below 50%. That year's response rate at 38.3% remains however, within acceptable limits of mailed survey returns (Oppenheim, 1970). The overall response rate of 64.5% obtained during the six weeks of the survey suggests: 1) that the respondents were able to be contacted and 2) that graduates retained a high level of interest in the school itself, its professional program, and/or the survey.

An examination of the convocation figures presented in Table 1 reveals a marked increase from 1976 onward. This corresponds with the development of the new School of Social Work in 1974 and the associated revamping of the BSW degree program into the cornerstone of professional social work training in Newfoundland.

Not surprising, the demographic data describes a student body that was primarily young, female and single. The very young age

of the majority of Newfoundland graduates, compared with those described by Maslany (1976) and Mahler (1982), may be accounted for by the completion of high school at Grade XI, since 61% of the study sample entered the program directly from high school (see Table 4).

The cohort of 44 respondents 25 years of age or older at graduation reflected the 18.1% who were married during their student years, as well as the 10% who had children. The findings of Sales, Shore and Bolitho (1980) suggested that this group was a unique cohort who may experience difficulties with practical issues such as child care and finances, and with the addition of the student role to the role(s) of spouse, and/or parent.

Social work is regarded as a female-dominated profession. This appears to be especially true in Newfoundland. The ratio of females (80%) to males (20%) in Memorial's program was higher than that found in any similar study reported in the literature.

The researcher was aware that over 90% of the student body in the BSW program since its inception came from communities in Newfoundland. The study findings suggest a moderate geographic relocation trend towards larger communities and, to a lesser extent, from Newfoundland to other parts of Canada. The preponderance of graduates come from cities (over half) and are employed in cities rather than rural communities.

Regardless of modest population shifts it appears clear that Memorial University is training Newfoundlanders to work as social workers in urban Newfoundland. This connotes a tightly-knit professional community with close ties between the school and practice settings in which jobs are available.

The study sample falls clearly into two categories of social work experience. The 81.2% with less than two years of actual experience, or little or no social work experience, is consistent with the young age of the student body. Similarly, the remaining students who had significant experience in the social welfare field prior to returning for the BSW degree is supported by the cohort of 44 (22%) older respondents previously mentioned.

Most employment studies of social work graduates report little difficulty in finding employment. Mahler (1982) reported the most disappointing results with only 46.8% finding social work employment within one year of graduation. Crane (1974) reported 60% of BSW graduates working in the social welfare field at the time of follow-up. Maslany's (1976) study of the Saskatchewan program, which was especially designed to accommodate experienced part-time students, reported that 80% had secured employment within the first three months after completing the requirements for the degree. The present study found that 88% of respondents had found social work jobs in the same length of time.

In this regard, the results of this study are surprising in light of the current nation-wide recession and the persistent high unemployment rate in this province. These graduates were able to find jobs quickly and to remain employed for extensive periods of time. As well, a higher percentage (79.5) worked in the social welfare field than found by McMahon (69%) in 1977. Those who no longer worked in the social welfare field appeared to have begun their careers in social work jobs and left of their own choice.

The social welfare employment situation in Newfoundland appears to be a stable one with employees making few job changes. Seemingly,

the job market has been able to absorb the numbers of graduates produced by the School, since only four respondents identified themselves as seeking employment.

The finding that the largest single cohort (38.1%) of the study sample is employed in hospital settings and 48.8% of the total are working in health-related settings is surprising since it has generally been assumed that the Department of Social Services, with the largest number of designated social work positions, would also be the principal employer. Consistent with this finding, only 35.6% of the respondents reported working in the traditional residual welfare functions of income maintenance, child welfare and corrections. If, as indicated by these data, the employment opportunities for social workers are primarily health-related, this may have significant implications for the curriculum of the BSW program.

Findings related to the deployment of graduates within agencies is similar to data reported elsewhere. For example, Crane (1974) found that 93% of the BSW respondents reported casework/groupwork components in their practice, with 34% indicating a substantial supervisory/administrative component in their work. In Maslany's (1976) study, 52% of those who were employed indicated that their main job focus was casework and 25% indicated they were employed in supervisory/administrative positions. Unfortunately, no U.S. figures on the deployment of BSW graduates are available for comparison purposes. It is interesting to note that only 8.5% of this study sample (n=174) described major professional responsibility for other than the traditional social work roles, suggesting a basically conservative practice environment.

Post-graduation educational experiences of this study sample were generally similar to the BSW graduates in Mahler's (1982) eight year retrospective follow-up. She found that 33.1% of respondents were studying for, or had completed further degrees. Statistics Canada's (1981) survey of 1976 graduates reported that 38.2% of the BSW's planned to return to university within two years. In Crane's (1976) study sample (followed up less than one year after graduation), 8.5% had returned to college or university. McMahon (1977) discovered that 65% of social service worker graduates were interested in obtaining a university degree in social work.

The relatively high rate of return to school for the American graduates might be explained by the difficulties they experienced finding employment. This study sample's high rate of subsequent involvement in continuing education cannot be interpreted in the same way. One may speculate that it reflected some gaps in educational preparation for the positions obtained by the graduates.

The issue of job preparation in social work education has been examined in several recent studies and provides useful comparative information. Radin (1976) found that all of her study sample (n=730) received above average ratings of their competence by their work supervisors. Similarly, 86% of Mahler's (1982) sample reflected positively on their overall educational experience. A similar finding (85%) was provided by Maslany (1976). In the present study, all but 16 of the 202 respondents felt they had been adequately or very well prepared for employment.

Positively perceived evaluations of the three main components of MUN's BSW program did not fall below 84% endorsement. For example,

field practice was viewed as the most valuable aspect of the program, with an overwhelming 94.7% positive response. This parallels the findings of Mahler (1982).

Problems with coursework are the commonest subject of criticism in studies of this type. Maslany (1976) reported that 81% of respondents felt there were some gaps in their coursework. The specific findings in the present study differ significantly from Mahler's (1982) on only one item. MUN's graduates gave a high rating to 'The History of Social Welfare' course as distinct from other macro-oriented subjects. Otherwise, this pattern of responses may reflect the particular perspective of generalist-trained social workers employed in traditional settings. This profile of the social work practitioner is similar to the one described by Crane almost a decade earlier (1974).

As indicated in Table 10, when respondents rank-ordered specific content areas of which they perceived themselves to have a good understanding, Human Behaviour and the Social Environment was almost universally endorsed. This endorsement may reflect an impressionistic rather than factual interpretation of the course title including the range of human behaviour-related courses taken in other areas of the curriculum. The confusion may have been exacerbated by the fact that the nomenclature has varied since the inception of the BSW program.

The study sample's present identification with the social work profession appears to measure up very well. Compared with Mahler's study (1982), which reported that only 27% of respondents had joined professional organizations since graduation, the findings that 59% were members of their provincial social work association at some time, and 65% belonged to some professional or occupational association, reflected

a significant degree of commitment to voluntarism and professional socialization. A recent follow-up of MSW graduates of The University of Toronto reported that only 51% belonged to their professional associations (Thomlison, 1982). These findings suggest that the BSW graduates from MUN's School of Social Work achieved a professional identity beyond their employment status.

Correlational Analyses

Following the first-level analyses which obtained frequencies and condescriptive factors ($\bar{x}$'s and S.D.'s), the data were analyzed further to identify the relationships between variables of interest and significance. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Co-efficients and Student t-tests were used to scrutinize the data at this level. These results are organized according to: 1) the mature BSW student, 2) social welfare versus non-social welfare employment, 3) provincial social services versus hospital sub-groups, and 4) the perceived value of various BSW program components. Other variables were similarly scrutinized but did not provide significant results.

The mature BSW student. The first-level descriptive analyses previously presented indicated a cohort of mature BSW students. Unlike the majority of students whose modal age at graduation was 21 years, this group of 44 students were 25 years or older at graduation and appeared to have a unique set of defining characteristics. Further analyses provided data from which to construct a profile of this sub-group.

The results showed that the mature student is likely to have considerable employment experience in the social work field both prior to entering the program and after graduation. While in the program this student was unique in valuing faculty support and having a good understanding of the coursework in administration. Since returning to employment, this person's major area of responsibility is likely to be in administration, and/or supervision. This graduate is also

likely to have attended continuing education programs sponsored by MUN's School of Social Work, and is likely to be enrolled in another degree program at present. Table 11 highlights the characteristics of this cohort.

Table 11

The Mature BSW Student Profile: A breakdown by selected items and age
(n=44)

Selected Items	Age (25 years or older) Correlation Coefficients (r's)	
Much pre-study social work experience	.43	$p < .001$
Post-study social work experience	.27	$p < .001$
Value of faculty support	.14	$p < .05$
Understanding of administration course	.15	$p < .05$
Administration/Supervisor position	.29	$p < .001$
Attended School of Social Work continuing education	.14	$p < .05$
Present enrollment in a degree program	.19	$p < .05$

Social welfare versus non-social welfare employment. Two sub-group categories--those now employed in the social welfare field and those who are not--were computed from the questionnaire item which asked respondents to describe their present occupational situation. It was presumed that differences in the value of the program and its components and in understandings of the course content would exist between these two groups. However, no significant differences between the two groups could be identified. It appears, therefore, that

employment choices, including the decision not to practise social work, are not significantly related to the respondents' perceptions of the program.

Provincial social services versus hospital sub-groups. When the location of the present employer was identified, responses were classified into three discrete categories of social welfare employment: 1) departments of social services (DOSS), 2) hospitals (HOSP) and 3) an 'other' category which included all other provincial and federal government services, and all non-governmental organizations. The results showed that the 'other' sub-group had only one distinctive feature--they did not express having a good understanding of the Human Behaviour and Social Environment course. Since this finding is limited and subject to speculation, and this group was not significant in any other analyses performed, they were excluded from further discussion.

Data analyses in this regard indicated that the DOSS employees and the HOSP sub-group were mutually exclusive, had different perceptions and characteristics and, on that basis, may warrant further study. For example, the DOSS and HOSP sub-groups were markedly different in a number of respects and were in agreement in only one respect. Their assessment of coursework revealed that the DOSS employees gained a good understanding of three macro-oriented courses while the HOSP group felt positively only about The History of Social Welfare course.

These two sub-groups had different experiences in finding employment, with the DOSS employees reporting no significant difficulty. It is reasonable to assume that many of those previously reported, who had jobs before graduating (89), were employed by these departments.

The HOSP group also reported significant attendance at School of Social Work continuing education programs and significant participation in professional or occupational associations. Three measures were taken of indicators of professional socialization, as reflected by voluntary involvement in the social services. On each measure the HOSP group showed a higher degree of involvement when compared with the DOSS employees. The actual data noting these differences are provided in Table 12.

Table 12

Correlation Coefficients Distinguishing the DOSS from Hospital Employees on Selected Items in the Study

Selected Items	Correlation Coefficients (r's)* DOSS	HOSP
Understanding of Social Research	+.18	-.17
Understanding of History of Social Welfare	+.14	+.13
Understanding of Social Policy/Planning	+.12	-.14
Difficult Job Search	-.13	+.15
Participation in Continuing Education	-.16	+.22
Membership in Professional Organizations	-.26	+.23
Actual number of memberships	-.25	+.21
Membership in Professional Social Work Association	-.28	+.25

Note. (*) Denotes $p < .05$ for each r listed above.

Perceived value of various BSW program components. When the global assessment of the BSW program, as preparation for employment, was measured against the assessments of each program component, a

significant relationship was found among them (see Table 13). The highest individual relationship was found between those who approved of the overall program and those who valued the coursework (r=.55, n=202, p < .001). This distinction is especially important because the earlier first-level descriptive analyses tended to downplay the value of the coursework when compared with field practice, and/or faculty support (see Table 9).

Table 13

Intercorrelation Matrix of Various Measures of BSW Program Components (n=202)

	Program Components (r's)*			
	Overall BSW Preparation	Value of Coursework	Value of Field Practice	Value of Faculty Support
Overall BSW Preparation	1.00	-	-	-
Value of Coursework	.55	1.00	-	-
Value of Field Practice	.39	.26	1.00	-
Value of Faculty Support	.36	.25	.32	1.00

Note. (*) p < .001 for all r's in this table.

Those respondents who endorsed the coursework component also ascribed significant importance to an understanding of the following content areas:

(i) Assessment/intervention - r=.37, n=204, p < .001;

(ii) The history of social welfare - r=.25, n=204, p < .001;

(iii) Communication techniques - r=.24, n=204, p < .001;

(iv) Community resources - r=.18, n=203, p < .05.

These results suggest that those who valued the coursework component were significantly different from those who attached value to field practice or faculty support. This inference is based on the fact that no significant relationships were found to exist between those valuing field practice or faculty support and any coursework content area.

Discussion of correlational analyses. The profile of the mature BSW student is generally similar to the samples of Maslany (1976) and Mahler (1982). However, the Newfoundland cohort may be somewhat unique in that they have established social work careers prior to entering the program, and are appointed to supervisory or administrative positions once they have completed their professional degree program. In other words, one may speculate that these mature students obtain the BSW degree to ensure their promotion within the system rather than to gain admittance to it.

These students would also appear to be serious about social work as an occupation. Although they have achieved management positions, they are significantly involved in further education. This may be explained by the prior lack of an established group of MSWs in management positions in Newfoundland in comparison to other Canadian provinces. Thus, this older cohort is educating itself for these roles.

In order for MUN's School of Social Work to continue to appeal to such a group, it may be worthwhile to consider recognizing the mature student's previous experience by an advanced standing program of studies. This has been experimented with by The University of Toronto, School of Social Work at the MSW level, and experienced BSWs have reported more satisfaction with their program of studies than

regular MSW graduates (Thomlison, 1982).

Failure to find any significant distinction between graduates working in the social welfare field and those outside it was somewhat unexpected. This may have resulted from problems created by the broad definition of the social welfare field used in this study. Many of the respondents placed in the social welfare field category were no longer holding designated social work positions. Moreover, those who were classified as working outside the social welfare field may have perceived themselves as social workers in terms of their evaluations of the BSW program. This confusion may have blurred the lines of distinction between these two groups.

The noted differences between the department of social services employees and the hospital social workers merit further study. The academic orientation of the two groups appears to differ significantly on courses pinpointed in this study and may diverge early and often upon more careful scrutiny. Certainly, several notable employment attributes after graduation are dissimilar. Discussion of these differences as an integral part of the academic program might contribute to exciting learning opportunities for students in the BSW program.

Each component of the BSW degree program--field placement, faculty support and coursework--is important in any evaluation of the overall program. Because coursework tends to be overtly targeted for criticism by many students, it is important to be able to assess this component with some precision.

In this study it was possible to identify a group of students whose positive evaluation of the program related to a good understanding of at least four content areas. This relationship suggests that it is

seemingly more important for graduates to value their coursework components. This conclusion is drawn from the knowledge that no significant relationships were found to exist between the overall evaluation of the program and either the field practice or faculty support. This finding may assist educators in building curricula which students will understand, enjoy and find meaningful for job opportunities.

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study will be discussed according to; 1) Conclusions related to the literature review, 2) findings of the study, and 3) limitations.

Conclusions Related to the Literature Review

The findings of this study seem to portray an accurate reflection of the picture of social service delivery in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is important to recognize that at the time the BSW program at Memorial University began, there were no more than a dozen professionally trained social workers in the province. Therefore, the BSW program was not set up to provide an alternative level of practitioner to the MSW. Instead, it was perceived and introduced as the cornerstone of the professional education for practice in the province.

This study re-examined a notion proposed by Crane (1974), that schools of social work develop distinctive educational programs based on assumptions that such decisions will eventually influence service delivery. This study reviewed extensive recent changes in the social service delivery systems of Britain, the United States and Canada and concluded that political and economic realities are more likely to determine employment opportunities in North America, than are professional considerations about the availability of personnel with specialized training. For effective planning to be introduced, it will require the establishment of bodies such as the British Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work, with legislated mandates to set standards for social work education. The formalized mechanism

for community input is in place at Memorial's School of Social Work, but it is not currently being utilized as effectively as it might be.

Findings of the Study

In 1976, and again in 1982, MUN's School of Social Work confirmed its intention to provide education programs 'with a primary focus on rural issues' (MUN School of Social Work, 1976, p. 4). The basis of this thrust does not appear to have come from the students themselves or is reflective of the manpower needs of the practice community. More specifically, 60% of the respondents came from communities the size of Corner Brook or larger and 70% are now working in cities (see Table 3). Furthermore, only 32.2% of the respondents worked for provincial departments of social services, but 38.1% are now working in hospitals (see Table 6). A further breakdown of these data reveals that 48.8% of the respondents work in health-related settings. These data suggest that a significant number of BSW graduates work in complex, specialized, urban settings greater than 25,000 residents.

The results indicated that employment opportunities have been readily available for Memorial graduates compared to those from other BSW programs. Ninety-eight percent of the study sample had found social work positions within 10 months of graduation and it took an average of only 1.4 months to find a job. It should be noted that this research was based on data covering the period from May, 1970 to May, 1982, prior to the extreme financial restraint program introduced by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador in late 1982.

The deployment of MUN graduates is similar to the traditional pattern found by Crane a decade ago (1974). Only 8.5% of the respondents reported that their major area of responsibility was in community

organization, research, planning or teaching. The majority (66.2%) were primarily responsible for direct treatment, and the remainder are now administrators (17.2%) or supervisors (8.1%).

This study revealed that MUN's BSW graduates are younger and have more females proportionately, than any other reported survey of a similar nature (Crane, 1974; Maslany, 1976; Mahler, 1982). The modal age at graduation was 21 years. The students appeared to make the decision to become social workers without any significant social work experience or, as one may surmise, without much life experience, e.g., marriage, work, or child-rearing. Although the School must be aware of this in a day-to-day operational sense, it may also have implications for curriculum which should be explored further. For example, one might ask if age and curriculum are mismatched on some courses offered at MUN.

This study also identified a cohort of mature BSW graduates (n=44-age 25 or older at graduation). This group had a number of significantly different characteristics from their younger counterparts (see Table 11). They had acquired a great deal of social work experience prior to entering the BSW program and now generally held many of the administrative positions in the province's social welfare field. Such a group might respond favourably to program options similar to those offered by The University of Regina (Maslany, 1976) or other outreach offerings through Memorial's Extension Service.

The respondents in this study gave a generally positive global assessment of the BSW program. Nearly 80% evaluated their preparation as adequate and a further 13% reported they were very well prepared. This finding is similar to those found in two other assessments of BSW programs (Maslany, 1976; Mahler, 1982).

Evaluations of coursework suggested that the students understood the micro-level courses associated with casework practice best. Human Behaviour and Social Environment was almost universally endorsed by the respondents, although this may have been based on an impressionistic rather than factual interpretation of this content area. Macro-level courses were significantly less well understood, e.g., social policy, research, administration.

Field practice and faculty support also received high endorsements from the study sample. Nonetheless, second-level correlational analyses revealed a significant relationship between those who valued the overall program and those who understood at least four content areas. Since coursework is the most frequently criticized program component (Maslany, 1976; Mahler, 1982), it is important to pursue relationships in this area by analyzing data beyond the first descriptive level which other studies did.

When comparing this study sample with others from similar studies, there was approximately similar involvement in continuing education. Twenty-six percent of MUN's graduates were studying for or had completed degrees. This compares with 33.1% in Mahler's (1982) American study of BSW graduates. The high rate of return to study for the American graduates may be explained by their difficulty finding employment. In this present study, it is more probable that promotion to a more senior position is the primary employment objective.

An increasing interest has been shown by researchers in the professional socialization of students, yet very few studies have reported on this attribute. Mahler (1982) stated that 27% of her respondents had joined professional organizations after graduation. A follow-up of University of Toronto MSW graduates indicated that 51%

belonged to their professional associations (Thomlison, 1982). The respondents in the present study reported that 59% were members of their provincial social work association at some time, and 65% were affiliated with some professional or occupation-related organization. These findings reflect positively on MUN's BSW graduates' sense of professional socialization and the need for continued progress to meet this need.

Limitations

There are inherent problems with pencil and paper research procedures which have implications for this study. One problem relates to the accuracy of the reported information which involved recalling information from as much as 12 years ago. Respondents were also asked for opinions, which may be distorted by intervening events as well as faulty recall. Given the close-knit nature of the Newfoundland professional community, some responses may have been influenced by fear that the respondent could be identified. In relation to these concerns, this study may be viewed as a first step in developing a data base on this subject.

The research is limited by the static nature of the findings of the project. The data reflect facts or opinions felt to be correct at that moment in time. In order to be useful to social work education, a mechanism must be developed to utilize the information and translate it into action.

It is surprising to note that only a handful of studies have been reported on BSW programs. More meaningful comparisons of the findings of this study could be made if a greater range of studies of this nature were apparent in the literature.

This study, its methods and findings, is essentially setting-specific to the BSW programs offered by the School of Social Work at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Thus, the capability of generalizing the findings to other schools or programs is limited.

There was great difficulty in operationalizing and identifying the dimensions of certain key concepts, e.g., the social welfare field, professional education versus professional training, continuing education and the Human Behaviour and Social Environment course. This translated methodologically into occasional instances of inconsistency in completing the questionnaires.

As indicated in Appendix B of this report (p. 89) some questions and their interpretations may have different meanings for different people. It is important, therefore, that future research consider ways of asking questions to elicit more exact data.

Recommendations

In order to corroborate the findings of this study and to build on this data base, it is recommended that further research in this subject area be undertaken by the School of Social Work. The research might focus on the sub-groups of special interest identified in the present study, e.g., social workers in hospital settings, DOSS employers, mature students. Such research should utilize different methods of assessing problems and acquiring data that would enhance the reliability of the findings.

Research of the nature of this study is only valuable if it is applied to the populations and environments from which it is derived. The School of Social Work should continue to utilize available mechanisms to develop linkages between it and the community that would

ensure the continuous and effective interchange of information from community to School and back to the community.

This research project revealed long-standing difficulties experienced by the social work profession in defining key concepts which guide our practice. We have a responsibility to come to grips with the vagueness and ambiguity of such definitions, e.g., fields of social work practice, major area of practice responsibility, in order to be able to conduct useful research effectively.

The specific findings of this study, as they relate to social work practice in rural settings and health care, require further consideration. The curriculum should be re-examined to explore ways in which these diverse settings can be adequately treated.

The data indicated that a large number of BSW graduates participate in a variety of continuing education programs. It is recommended that the School consider ways in which it can co-ordinate its activities with community-based staff development departments to provide comprehensive continuing education for the practice community.

The cohort of mature students were shown to have a unique set of attributes that were significantly different from the younger student body. Consideration might be given to recognizing their previous social work experience and related knowledge with advanced standing in the coursework and/or field practice components of the BSW program.

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APPENDIX A

Memorial University of Newfoundland
School of Social Work
B.S.W. Follow-up Study

October 1, 1982.

Dear B.S.W. Graduate:

This study is a survey of all graduates of Memorial's Bachelor of Social Work program. The general purpose is to find out about the present employment of the graduates and the relevance of the program to actual employment situations.

The study is being undertaken as a part of the requirements for the School's Master of Social Work program. It is the first study of its kind at Memorial and has received the enthusiastic support of the school. Its aim is not to follow-up individual students but rather to assess the effectiveness of a particular program.

Many graduates have left social work practice for different kinds of endeavours over the years. Others may never have entered the field. Whatever your situation, your input will be important to give a more complete description of the employment experiences of graduates. You are encouraged to complete as much of the questionnaire as applies to you.

The questions about employing organizations are asked in detail to fit the purpose of the study. Although it could be possible to identify individuals from this data, I want to assure you that all information will be treated with the strictest confidence. No individual will be identified in reporting the findings. All information will be analysed as group data.

I would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation in this study. The results will be available by the spring, 1983. If you are interested in the findings please contact the School at that time.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. F. O'Flaherty,
M.S.W. Student.

A Follow-up Study of B.S.W. Graduates
from the
School of Social Work
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Instructions:

Respondents are assured that the information will be treated with the strictest confidence. Although it might be possible to identify respondents by agency or community, no individual will be identified in the report. All information will be analysed as group data.

* Please answer by CIRCLING the number or WRITING in the correct response for each question.

Background Information:

1. Sex: 1 = Female 2 = Male

2. Marital Status: 1 = Single, never married 4 = Widowed
2 = Married 5 = Separated
3 = Divorced 6 = Common-law relationship

3. Where have you lived for most of your life?

1 = In a large city of over 150,000
2 = In a city of 31,000 - 150,000
3 = In a city of 15,000 - 30,000
4 = In a town of 2,000 - 14,000
5 = In a rural community of less than 2,000

4. Where are you working at present?

1 = In a large city of over 150,000
2 = In a city of 31,000 - 150,000
3 = In a city of 15,000 - 30,000
4 = In a town of 2,000 - 14,000
5 = In a rural community of less than 2,000

5. Current Place of Residence:

_____ _____
(Name of City or Town) (Province or State if in U.S.A.)

6. What year did you graduate with your B.S.W. from Memorial? _____ (Actual Year)

7. What was your age at graduation? _____

8. What is the longest period of time you have ever held a steady job in the social welfare field?

Before your B.S.W. degree: _____ Years or _____ Months
and
After your B.S.W. degree: _____ Years or _____ Months

9. What is the highest degree you have obtained to date? _____
(Name of Degree)

10. Which of the following best described your situation while you were in the B.S.W. program? (Circle ONE).

1 = single 3 = married with children
2 = married 4 = single with children

General Questions about Social Work Education:

11. Which of the following statements most closely represented your situation when you entered the School of Social Work at Memorial? (Circle ONE only).

1 = I came directly from high school through junior division
2 = I was a post-B.A. student from MUN or another University
3 = I was a housewife
4 = I was employed in a social work position in the social welfare field
5 = I was employed in a non-social work position in the social welfare field
6 = I was employed outside the social welfare field
7 = I was unemployed

12. Which of the following best described your situation about social work experience, paid or voluntary, when you entered the School of Social Work at Memorial? (Circle ONE only).

    1 = I had no social work experience
    2 = I had minimal social work experience
    3 = I had significant social work experience

13. How did your B.S.W. program prepare you for employment?

    1 = Not at all
    2 = Poorly
    3 = Adequately
    4 = Very Well

14. How adequate were the following aspects of the B.S.W. program? Place a checkmark for each one in the corresponding box:

Program Component	Not Adequate	Somewhat Adequate	Very Adequate
Coursework			
Field Practice			
Professional Support and Instruction by Faculty			

15. Based on your classroom experiences, did you graduate from the B.S.W. program with a good understanding of the following content areas? Check YES or NO:

Content Area	YES	NO
Human behaviour and social environment		
Communication techniques		
Social research		
The history and current nature of social welfare and the social work profession		
Community resources		
Assessment and intervention skills		
Social policy and planning		
Administration, supervision		

Employment History:

16. Which of the following best describes your present situation? (Circle ONE only).

    1 = I am employed in the social welfare field
    2 = I have left paid employment for further full-time studies
    3 = I have left paid employment to accept family responsibilities
    4 = I am employed outside the social welfare field
    5 = I am unemployed
    6 = I have not worked in the social welfare field since graduation and do not expect to do so

17. Did you have difficulty in obtaining employment as a social worker after graduating with your B.S.W.?

    1 = Yes 0 = No

18. How long did it take to find employment as a social worker after graduating with your B.S.W. _____ (actual number of months).

19. Since graduation, how many social work positions have you held? _____ (specify number)

20. If employed, how long have you been in your present position? _____ months or _____ years

21. What is the full name of the organization where you are employed at present?

_____

22. What is your office location?

_____
(City, Town, Province or State)

23. In which type of social welfare agency are you employed? (Circle ONE).

1 = child welfare	6 = mental health	11 = education
2 = family services	7 = vocational/employment	12 = rehabilitation
3 = correctional	8 = mental retardation	13 = private practice
4 = recreational	9 = services for the aged	14 = Other _____ (please specify)
5 = medical	10 = income security or public assistance	

24. Major area of professional responsibility. (Please Circle ONE).

1 = Administration	4 = Supervision	7 = Research/Evaluation
2 = Planning	5 = Direct Treatment	8 = Other _____ (please specify)
3 = Community organization	6 = Teaching/Training	

Continuing Education:

25. Are you enrolled in a university degree program on a part-time basis at present?

1 = Yes 0 = No If Yes, specify _____

26. Have you completed a formal non-degree education program since graduating with your B.S.W.?

1 = Yes 0 = No

If Yes, please specify _____

27. Have you attended any continuing education programs sponsored by the School of Social Work?

1 = Yes 0 = No

28. Is there a formal staff education/development program in your employing organization?

1 = Yes 0 = No

28a. If Yes, which of the following have you received from the staff education program since graduation? (Circle all that apply).

1 = orientation program
2 = occasional educational sessions
3 = ongoing seminars/workshops on special subjects
4 = funding for courses at other institutions
5 = educational leave
6 = other _____ (please specify)

29. Are you, or have you ever been, a member of any professional or occupational association related to the social welfare field?

1 = Yes 0 = No

29a. If Yes, please list the associations:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

If you would like to make any further comments on this study or this questionnaire please do so in the space provided below. When you have finished, please mail the questionnaire back as soon as possible in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

As indicated in question 14 (p. 87) on the questionnaire, respondents were asked to choose on an ordinal level scale one of three responses: 'Not Adequate', 'Somewhat Adequate', 'Very Adequate' in assessing program effectiveness. The response set generated data that conceptually and empirically deemed 'Somewhat Adequate' to be construed more positively than 'Not Adequate' and less positively than 'Very Adequate'. However, taken verbatim, 'Somewhat Adequate' may be perceived as being more negative than positive by some. Thus, one should use caution when interpreting such results and understand that for some respondents (however many) this may be a more negative than positive answer.